# The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Joins the National Information Exchange Model (NIEM)

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Created *11/12/2010 - 17:02*

Posted by ISE Bloggers [2] on Friday, November 12, 2010

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On Monday, October 25, Michael Carleton, HHS Chief Information Officer, signed the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for HHS to join the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security as the third primary sponsor of the NIEM program. The MOA outlines a cooperative effort to commit resources to support development and implementation of NIEM, as well as adds HHS as a member of the Executive Steering Council.

"The addition of Health and Human Services into the NIEM community allows for strategic growth in an area that is crucial to our state and local partners. I look forward to working with the many operating divisions within the HHS umbrella; this is an exciting time for the NIEM program," said Donna Roy, NIEM Executive Director.

NIEM?s growth into Health and Human Services expands the model beyond justice and homeland security to enable a broader community to leverage its mature framework. ?Different words, same problem. State, local, and federal systems need to communicate with each other if they?re going to achieve their goals," said Doug Fridsma, Director of the Office of Standards and Interoperability within the Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT.

HHS is currently building NIEM into the Federal Health Architecture. In addition, HHS Administration for Children and Families (ACF) has previously adopted a NIEM-enabled information exchange, the Child Support and Court/Judicial Message Exchange Data Model, which was a collaborative effort with the National Center for State Courts and the child support enforcement community. ACF looks to further extend NIEM into the human service space.

### About NIEM

NIEM represents a broad national program that is supported by local, state, tribal, and federal partners throughout the country. Since its inception in 2005, NIEM has evolved to address a growing community. NIEM is not a software program, a computer system, or a data repository?it is a common vocabulary and a mature framework surrounding information exchanges among governmental entities as well as with private sector and international partners. Through the use of the NIEM framework, disparate systems can share, exchange, accept, and translate information to achieve greater agility and efficiency in satisfying business needs and implementing repeatable processes. In addition, the information exchanges result in reusable artifacts that reduce future development costs. For more information, please visit www.NIEM.gov [1].

Fri, 11/12/2010

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